

CONFIDENTIAL

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Twin Registry in the U.S.

you saw the recent Swedish study (Lundman) on cardiovascular disease carried out on smoking and non-smoking twins, which showed that hereditary factors were the ones chiefly determining who gets the diseases. Smoking did not seem to make any significant contribution.

This study raised the question whether a parallel study could be made in the United States. This would require assembling a big collection of twins here, as we do not have a government sponsored-twin registry listing all U.S. twins as the Swedes do.

We have learned that under the leadership of the National Research Council, and using (we understand) Veterans Administration sources, a registry of 17,800 twins (or pairs?) has been set up. Ninety percent replied to questionnaires and their locations are known. With use of V.A. records, information on their physical constitution when inducted, health records during service and illnesses reported to the V.A. have all been collected. A health questionnaire has also been sent to them and a questionnaire that asks them in nearly all cases whether they are identical or non-identical. In addition, their finger-prints are being examined to determine which twins are identical. Deaths and causes of death have been recorded in some cases.

The report is that this registry is to be used by a Swedish group headed by Lars Friberg for a follow-up on the Swedish study. The first stage will be by questionnaire only. It is also said that Friberg (and Cedariol, his colleague) will apply to the A.M.A. E.R.F. for funds to assist the study.

One of our grantees has been offered an opportunity to see the full Friberg questionnaire and to add questions that might make the study ^{more} ~~stronger~~ more ground. (He has seen it but has no copy to keep.) He says it is already a very broad and well-designed questionnaire.

We are much interested in seeing this followed through. I intend to phone Dr. Berg on the subject since he is on the A.M.A. E.R.F. Committee.

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